

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully considered the Office Action mailed March 21, 2006. Claims 1-3, and 5-34 remain pending. Claims 32-34 have been amended to clarify the location of the second connector holder mounting location. Support for this amendment can be found, e.g., on page 14, lines 18-21; and in Figures 19, 20, and 25. No new matter has been added. Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing claims 1-3, 5-21, and 23-31 and respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claim 22 and claims 32-34.

Claim Rejections

Claims 32-34 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,725,249 to Blackwood et al. Applicants respectfully submit the rejection is overcome.

Claim 32 recites, in part, an outlet box including a connector holder, a housing defining a connector access opening, means for mounting the connector holder at a first location, and means for mounting the connector holder at a second location. The first location is adjacent the connector access opening. The second location is recessed within the housing from the connector access opening relative to the first location.

In contrast, Blackwood discloses a connector assembly including adapters mounted at one of two locations. Both locations are positioned adjacent the connector access opening. See, e.g., Figure 1. Blackwood does not disclose or suggest a connector assembly including means for mounting a connector holder at a first location adjacent a connector access opening and means for mounting a connector holder at a second location recessed within the housing from the connector access opening relative to the first location.

For at least these reasons, Blackwood does not anticipate claim 32. Applicants assert the rejection is overcome and request withdrawal of the rejection. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 32 is requested.

Claim 33 recites, in part, a method for assembling an outlet box including providing a connector holder; selecting one of a first and second connector mounting locations; and mounting the connector holder at the selected one of the first and second connector mounting locations. The second connector mounting location is recessed within the housing from the connector access opening relative to the first connector mounting location.

Applicants, therefore, assert Blackwood does not anticipate claim 33 for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 32. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claim 33.

Claim 34 recites, in part, an outlet box including a connector holder, a housing defining a connector access opening, a first connector holder mount, and a second connector holder mount. The first connector holder mount is positioned adjacent the connector access opening. The second connector holder mount is positioned at a location recessed within the housing from the connector access opening relative to the first location.

Applicants, therefore, assert Blackwood does not anticipate claim 34 for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 32. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claim 34.

Claim 22 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,781,686 to Robinson et al. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 22 recites, in part, an outlet box including a housing and a connector holder. The housing includes a peripheral wall that extends between first and second sides of the housing. The peripheral wall includes a first portion having a first outer face and defining a connector access opening. The peripheral wall also includes a second portion having a second outer face separate from the first outer face. The outlet box also includes at least four break-outs provided on the second portion of the peripheral wall (e.g., Figure 8-10) and at least four break-outs provided on the base of the housing adjacent the at least four break-outs provided on the second portion of the peripheral wall (e.g., Figure 5-7). The break-outs in the peripheral wall are adapted to form openings in the peripheral wall that face outwardly from the housing in at least four different directions.

In contrast, Robinson discloses a connection housing including break-out locations only in the peripheral wall. See, e.g., Fig. 1 of Robinson. Robinson does not disclose or suggest providing additional break-out locations in the base of the housing. Furthermore, Robinson discloses providing break-out locations facing outwardly in only three directions. Applicants assert that adding a break-out facing outwardly from the peripheral wall *in a fourth direction* would not be a mere duplication of essential working parts as stated in the office action.

In order to provide a fourth break-out facing outwardly from the peripheral wall in a fourth direction, either the fourth break-out would need to be added to the wall defining the

access opening, or a new side would need to be added to the housing disclosed in Robinson. With respect to the former option, adding a break-out to the wall defining the access opening would distinguish Robinson from the invention recited in claim 22. With respect to the latter option, Robinson fails to provide any motivation to add a new side to the housing. See col. 5, lines 56-61 ("the illustrated embodiment is a generally *rectangular*, planer member having a perimeter defined by the *front edge portion* 32, a *rear edge portion* 42 opposite from the front edge portion, a *left edge portion* 44 and a *right edge portion* 46 extending between the front and rear edge portions.").

For at least these reasons, Robinson does not anticipate claim 22. Applicants assert the rejection is overcome and request withdrawal of the rejection. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 22 is requested.

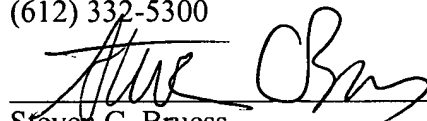
In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date:

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